

*In the Specification*

On page 1, please amend as set forth below the paragraph following “Related Applications”:

This application is a divisional of U.S. patent application serial number 10/186,251, filed June 27, 2002, now U.S. Patent 6,713,646; which claims the benefit of the filing date of United States Provisional Patent Application serial number 60/372,264, filed April 12, 2002.

On page 56, please insert after the last claim the text below:

Abstract

One aspect of the present invention relates to base-labile crosslinkers. A second aspect of the present invention relates to degradable crosslinked polymers and hydrogels comprising a base-labile crosslinker. The present invention also relates to a method of influencing the degradation rate of a crosslinked polymer or hydrogel, comprising the step of incorporating uncharged acrylamides into the crosslinked polymer or hydrogel.